Selling of kidneys

2307. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether reports of people selling kidneys are on the rise;

(b) if so, the number of cases detected in the last one year; and

(c) the steps taken to check such sales under duress?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Under Section 13(2) of the transplantation of Human Organs Act, 1994, the State Governments are empowered to appoint by a notification one or more officers as Appropriate Authorities for the purposes of the Act. Such Appropriate Authorities are empowered to investigate any complaints of breach of provisions of the said Act including those pertaining to sale and purchase of human organs including kidney. The information relating to incidents involving the selling of kidney which is against the provisions and punishable under the said Act should be available with the State Government(s) concerned in whose jurisdiction the offence takes place. The Director General of Health Services has been appointed as the Appropriate Authority in respect of all the Union Territories including the N.C.T. of Delhi. Two cases of people selling their kidneys pertaining to Delhi have come to the notice during last one year.

(c) The Transplantation of Human Organs Act was enacted on 8th July, 1994 to provide for the regulation of removal, storage and transplantation of human organs for therapeutic purposes and for the prevention of commercial dealings in human organs and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. The said Act is applicable in the whole of the States of Goa, Maharashtra and Himachal Pradesh and all the Union Territories. Other States can adopt the Act by resolution. It has since been adopted/enacted by all the States except Bihar and newly created States, namely, Uttaranchal, Jharkhand and Chhatisgarh. Under Sections 18 to 23 of the said Act, necessary provisions have been made to check such sale of human organs.

Health care scheme for school going children in Arunachal Pradesh

2308. SHRI NABAM REBIA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any health care scheme for poor school going children in the State of Arunachal Pradesh is being started;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (d) There is not Central Scheme in the Ninth Plan for providing health care services at Schools. The State Government of Arunachal Pradesh also does not have any such scheme.

Asthma vaccine

2309. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned, Singapore scientists create asthma vaccine from dust mite, which appeared in the Indian Express, dated 5th July, 2001;

(b) if so, the reaction of his Ministry;

(c) whether, according to WHO estimates, between 100 and 150 million people worldwide suffer from asthma;

(d) the percentage of population affected in India; and

(e) the details of schemes and programmes to contain and control asthma?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. According to Vallabhai Patel Chest Institute, Scientists from the National University of Singapore have developed a vaccine for controlling asthma using a gene from the dust mite. The dust mite is one of the commonest causes of allergic asthma. It is claimed to be the first-ever genetic vaccine for prevention of allergic asthma. The vaccine has so far been tested only in mice and rates and appears to be successful. No human studies have been carried out so far.

(c) to (e) According to WHO estimates, between 100 and 150 million people worldwide suffer from asthma. It is estimated that approximately 3-5 percent of the individual in India suffers from the bronchial asthma. Majority of hospitals, both in public and private sector, is equipped to treat asthma. In addition, several refferal centres are there in different cities where these patients may be referred for specialist consultations.